nature net

naturekenya.org • August '09

Photo: Martha Nzisa

Come learn and explore and celebrate with us 100 years for nature

There is something for everyone at the Nature Fair – whether your interest is in birds, bees, butterflies, plants, reptiles, mammals or community conservation.

What to expect?
Outdoor displays from Nature Kenya community groups, animal and plant groups
Displays from other wildlife and environmental organizations
Arts & Crafts for sale
Nature walks - bird walks, tree walks, dudu walks
Children activities - face painting, bouncing castle, Painting a mural, environmental games
Learn and Tease your brains - a continuous program of Wildlife Films, Illustrated talks, Quick fire quiz and spelling bees
Entertainment - thrilling performances of cultural dances and drama, acrobatics, puppet show and special performances by other entertainment groups

Also - Vulture Awareness Day at the Nature Fair

Come celebrate vultures, learn about the future of Kenya's vultures and what makes them unique! Held in conjunction with the Nature Fair on Sept 5-6th it is organized by the Raptor Working Group of the Bird Committee.

White-backed Vulture by Peter Usher

50 Years [illegible]
Discovery of [illegible]

Saturday 8 August

Venue: United States International University

Stony Brook Human Evolution Workshop VIII

A commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary and an expert discussion with international scientists on the significance of the find.

Registration KES 200 per person to cover the cost of tea/ coffee; a snack lunch is available at the USIU cafeteria.
The all day programme begins with registration from 9.00 a.m. and the first session at 10.00 a.m.

Contact Pauline 3865120/122
Pauline@turkanabasin.org

A big THANK YOU to our March Gala night prize sponsors:
• Serena Hotels
• Safari Link
• Island Camp, Lake Baringo
Also many thanks to the volunteers for your valuable time and support

Writers needed

If you enjoy writing and creating interesting posts in blogs, then you may want to consider applying to join our panel of writing experts for our online community site – naturekenya1000.ning.com

As a community volunteer 'writing expert' you get an opportunity to show your writing and or knowledge in your particular area of expertise. All members are welcome to blog on the site, but our 'writing experts' get special recognition.

Writing also presumes time spent responding to enquiries. If you are interested please do send us at office@naturekenya.org, links to work you have published.

New online site for you!

Spread the word Nature Kenya's online community site is launched

www.naturekenya1000.ning.com

Things to do: You can share your opinion, photos, videos, and take part in discussions! Ask and answer questions, share useful resources and links, organise group meetups in your area

Share the site with your family, friends, colleagues and contacts

action

Update on Lake Naivasha

Don Turner

Lake Naivasha is facing an environmental catastrophe. Human excesses and corporate greed throughout the District have reached an all-time high, and sadly we all have to face up to the hard fact that thirty years of unplanned and uncontrolled human activities and above all inadequate law enforcement have destroyed the lake and its entire ecosystem.

Current lake levels are the lowest on record, and the deepest point as at 09 July 2009 is off Hippo point (3.3m), with the mean over most areas of the lake at around 1.5 - 2m.

With little or no rain expected during the current cold season, crunch time will come sometime during July & early August for everyone including wildlife:

- The lake is now expected to drop by a further 5-7 inches before mid-August.
- Flower and vegetable farms face an acute shortage of water.
- Retrenching of workers is taking place and expected to accelerate.
- Hippo population of over 1200 is faced with severe shortage of grazing.
- A major cattle vs wildlife conflict looms over availability of grazing.
- Smallholder farms are now actively planting vegetables along the receding shorelines.

The sheer scale of the issues is now so vast and so complex that it seems we simply have to let nature take its course. Low rainfall is not the main issue. Most worrying of all is the effect all this will have on a local population heavily dependent upon the lake for their everyday needs.

Measures are now underway to establish the Lake Naivasha Conservation Forum spearheaded by both Lake Naivasha Riparian Association and Lake Naivasha Growers Group in some attempt to stem the current wave of destruction.

There is some good news: It would appear that there is an area on the western side of the lake that is providing some refuge for large numbers of ducks, pelicans and other waterbirds. The area is close to the Loldia property and clearly birds that have been displaced from areas bordering the main flower growing area along South Lake have managed to find somewhere suitable for them.

Tupendane©
Tupande Pamoja

office@naturekenya.org OR
frfcoordinator@eawildlife.org

Ksh 100 = 1 tree
Contribute towards this initiative to plant at least 1 million trees each year

Your Ksh 100 will go towards potting, watering, transport and planting of indigenous seedlings. The Tupande Pamoja facility, with partners, will see to it that the seedlings grow to surviving trees.

Join our tupendane campaign www.naturekenya1000.ning.com Send your Ksh 100 and send your 'tunapendana' photo

For updates go to
http://twitter.com/nature_net

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NatureKenya
The East Africa Natural History Society
1909 - 2009

Connecting nature & people
For contributions, advertising and subscriptions - contact us at
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office@naturekenya.org www.naturekenya.org

BirdLife INTERNATIONAL
Together for birds and people

RSPB

IUCN
The World Conservation Union

Go out and Look!
At the Evening Sky in August '09

Ian MacKay and Fleur Ng'weno

Choose an evening with no clouds or few clouds, and look up at the dark sky after sunset. Can you find the moon, stars and planets as mentioned below?

Moon, August 2009

August 6, full moon rises in the eost, opposite the sunset. The moon will briefly pass through part of the Earth's shadow, but this will not be noticeable. August 13, last quarter ("half" moon overhead at dawn). August 20, new moon (crescent over the sunset on 21st). August 27th, first quarter ("half" moon overhead at sunset).

Planets, August 2009

Bright Jupiter rises in the east (opposite the sunset) just after sunset. During the night, Jupiter and the stars seem to move across the sky from east to west. It is really our Earth that is spinning towards the east.

Two planets, Saturn – a steody golden light like a bright star – and little Mercury – brighter than Saturn this month –- are in the west over the sunset at sunset. Mercury ond Soturn oppear close together, separated by only 3 degrees, on August 17th. On the 22nd, the two plonets are near the crescent moon.

Brilliant Venus is high above the sunrise in the morning sky. It rises about two hours before the sun. Faint, reddish Mars is in the morning sky above Venus all month. Above Mars is another reddish light, the giant red star Aldebaran.

August Stars

In the constellation Scorpius the Scorpion is high in the southern sky in the evening. Look for the reddish star Antares, the scorpion's fiery eye. Bright stars above it are the scorpion's pincers. Below Antares, a line of stars curve like a fishhook. These are the scorpion's body and tail, with two stars as the stinger.

The bright blue-white star Spica is west of the Scorpion, high in the sky. The bright orange star Arcturus is high in the northwest. The brilliant white star Vega is low in the northeost.

The Milky Way stretches ocross the sky, from the Southern Cross in the southwest, across the Centaur (see June sky), across the Scorpion, to the east of Vega. This broad pale band is our galaxy, made up of millions and millions of stars.

EarthCorps

LOCAL RESTORATION • GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

EarthCorps is now accepting international applications for a 6-month service learning program in Seattle, Washington, USA. It brings together emerging environmental leaders to learn the fundamentals of:

- Environmental Service
- Community Building
- Leadership

EARTHCORPS CHARGES NO TUITION OR FEES for its services and in fact supplies insurance, individual homestay families, food, gear and a monthly stipend to all international participants.

There is the following minimum criteria to be considered for the program:

- 18-25 years of age
- Conversational English
- No Criminal Record

To ensure that every applicant meets strict criteria to qualify for o US J-1 Trainee visa, candidates should also have a 4 year college degree in the environmental field and 1 year of relevant work experience

OR

- 5 years of work experience in the environmental field

DATES:

Applicant Application Dead Line: October 31, 2009

TO APPLY:

Candidates should be referred to EarthCorps by an environmental organization (i.e. NGO, community group, university or student club). Materials are available online ot: http://www.earthcorps.org/join_international.php

* Candidate Nomination Deadline: September 31, 2009

Book at 4447151
or 4441030
info@letsgosafari.com

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE

5acreriversidepropertyKitengela, bordering Nairobi National Park and its wildlife. 20 kms from city center. Main house and servant quarters. Well developed garden with many indigenous plants.
Kshs 17.5 million.

Contact tel:020 891115.

FOR SALE

4WD Suzuki 1300cc with extras
VW citi.com 1400cc
Both low mileage, one owner, excellent condition.
Reasonable offers accepted.
0734 329830 evenings best.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Are you creative and have worked with **exhibitions design and layout** before? Are willing to spend a few hours a week helping the communities and action groups develop their exhibition stands? Call us now.

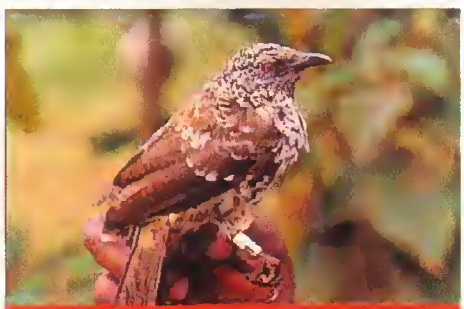
Contact Neema Mbeyu Tel: 020 3746090/9957 or 0725368254 Email:office@naturekenya.org

in the field

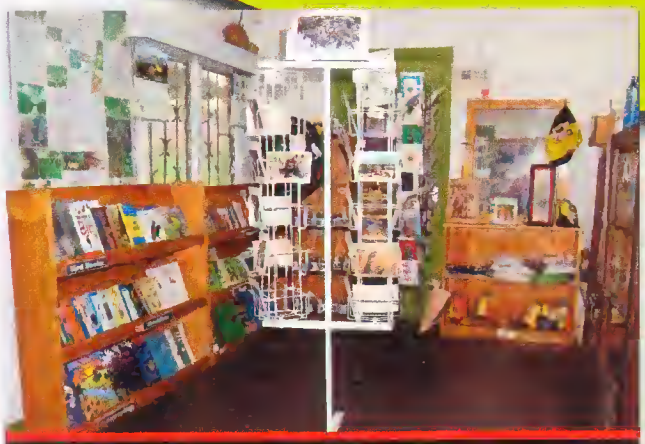
AUGUST AT A GLIMPSE

Wed 5 Wednesday Morning Birdwalk
Sat 8 Tree walk
Sun 16 Sunday Birdwalk
Mon 31 Tree Walk
Bird ringing every Tuesday morning (check with Ornithology section, National Museums)

Wednesday Morning Birdwalks meet EVERY WEEK at 8:45 am in the Museum staff car park. The entrance is on Kipande Road.
Sunday Birdwatch (also called "Pot-luck Outings") meet the THIRD Sunday of each month at 9:00 am at the same location. Bring lunch.
Contact the office for information on other birdwalks in Kakamega, Kisumu, Mombasa and other sites



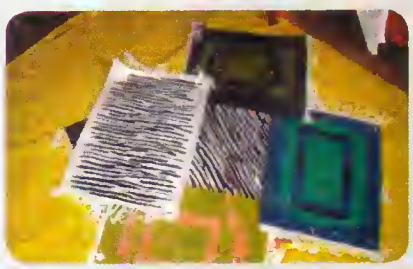
Bird-ringing: Please note that ringing will now take place on Tuesdays at 8 a.m.



NATURE-BASED Market

Communities engaging in nature conservation through enterprise
office@naturekenya.org

Shop is located at Nature Kenya, National Museum, Museum Hill, Nairobi
20 3746090, 0725 368254 or 0736 432089
office@naturekenya.org



Wollen rugs from the sheep rearing communities of north Kinangop
KES 1050/- depending on size

Artwork by Elias Kiama a member of the Kinangop community working to save highland grassland species
KES 1500/-

Honey from communities living around Arabuko-Sokoke Forest
KES 300/-

Mailing address:

Bird art by Elias Kiama
saliebirds@yahoo.com

Yes! Start my Nature Kenya membership

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